

[Just Like in School]

Duplicate

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Terry Roth

ADDRESS 47 West 69th Street, N.Y.C.

DATE February 20, 1939

SUBJECT Folklore Of Stage Hands - "JUST LIKE IN SCHOOL"

1. Date and time of interview February 20, 1939 - 11 to 4 P.M.
2. Place of interview Adolphi Theatre 53rd Street & 6th Avenue New York City
3. Name and address of informant No names to be mentioned.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Backstage.

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FOLKLORE

NEW YORK

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

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SUBJECT Folklore Of Stage Hands - "JUST LIKE IN SCHOOL" "JUST LIKE IN SCHOOL"

"Awright, fellehs, bring dat over here. Bring it right out, youse guys. En watch how you talk. Dere's a dame here. No doity talk — not much. She'll be like in school. Dere won't be nothin' you wont know, lady. You, over dere. Never mind de legs. Watch dat set. Put one and two up center. Dat odder one. Does dis go straight acrost? Yea. Wid a brace troo here. Ah don know. I tink do e winders a wrong. Somepun outa perportion. Yuh know, Elmer. Dat's de best set he ever done. Dis is fer de scene where all de actors stink from garlic like a sunoffagun. Dat number 12 up dere is wid yer name on dat. It's comin' down. Now. How about dem gas plugs? I give it to Clarkie downstairs. Betta get dem here — de ole man wants ta look atta aros. Well, where de hell is he?

Hey Matt, dat chicken wuz swell. Tree chickens fer a buck an' a half, an' de guy trows in a pounda sausage wid it. Whatta I know where he gets 'em. Me — no questions ast. Most of de chickens 'round here cost a buck an' a half to take dem outa eat themself. Now, on doze lights. Dere trowin' away money, 'cause dere goin' ta boin de God damn tings out. You got one in, you got 75 amps; you 2 got two in, you got 90 amps. Wid de trow, we have 85 feet. Dat should be 90 amps. Whatya need'sa reostat dat will hold it. Hey Rump! Dat's

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a prop, dere. Call up de delegate. Ef he says itsa prop, den itsa prop. Abie's brudder is a wreseller. Don' you know anyting, Sol. One of yer goils got a billin' fer de Fair. Sure. Wid Billy de Rose. He's gettin' one hunred goils, an' de rest uf de show's fulla phony lesbians an' Pansies.

Willay looka de bump on Mike's noodle. Ya see, Miss, what stage hands gets sometime. Dat's de bump a knowledge. He bent a pipe over his dome. Okay, Matt. We plug, in tomorrer mawnin'. I'm heatin' de juice on my board. Lookit dat set. De one wid de Piner color stand. Dat's where we boin de gin. Say Abie, whatta hell is de W.C.U.T. 2?"

"Dem people dat's always wet blanketin' de booze."

"Is dat what dat ting is? Lookit dat 42nd Street prop. Where is dere a loan shark on Times Square?"

"Hey, Mike, lesse dat bump. Jeezez. Is dat dat same show where de guy blew his hand off?"

"Yea. Boy. He wuz runnin' 'round like a wild man. I grab ahole a him an' I make a turnekit from my shoit. All de time he's bleedin' like a pig. An' me, I lost two shoits. Dey juiced up de fuss an' put it in hot fer de earthquake. Dey wuz usin' a little cannon wid shot gun shells. Cant use dem now or de new code. So dat wuz de foist night an' he's standin' dere wide de cannon in his hand and all ufa sudden it goes off. You oughta see. Dere's blood an' little pieces a meat is still on de drop."

"Sure. When you get ta makin' bombs fery Larry anyting kin happen. One night dey give me a smoke bomb an' dey give it to me fast an' furious. It goes boom. An' up goes de smoke. You're up dere religiously, an' doin' your walk an' you see de smoke. I die from 3 fright. De funny part is I get up an' see doze pilot light are out. I'm lookin' at de fuses an' all ufa sudden dey all run an' I see flame an' smoke. I got de flash — dare's sumepun wuz wrong. I awmost go off dat platform.

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Watch Abie. Abie is a scream. But he uses his head. He's got brains, Abie has. Anodder guy woulda got boined. Hey, Elmer. Bring de Hudson Tubes down left stage. Now, youse guys, put a flat dere. What kinda flat goes on dat pole? Dem's signal flags. Lookit de shape dere in. Lookit Abie dere. Marchin' backenfore wid de flag. He's playin' Charlie Chaplin in dat picshur. Hey, Abie, get de hair outta yer eyes. De wood peckers is comin'.

De boys'r cuttin' down. Dey know yer here. But you wait. Dey'll get hot. Just stick aroun'. Lookit dem up dere. Dere doin' de last scene — I wuz a good goil until —. Lookit dat stage manager beefin' about dat set. Say, Abie, tell him Goodyear has a lovely factry. Maybe we cud get dem to de de sets here. Yea, an ya better get Kelly. Dat electrician ripped out de whole hot line.

Hey, Elmer, dija hear about dat Jewish show. Dey took toiteen hunred an' forty openin' night. Dey eat dat stuff up out dere in Brooklyn. Dey wuz packin' 'em in so ast I tought dey wuz hangin' 'em up on hooks in dere.

Hello, darlin'. She's a dancer. He calls 'em darlin. I calls 'em Baby. Now dere hangin' de drop. Hey! Where in God's name is dem balls. Elmer, dere aint no balls in dat — no balls, just like I tellya. Send it up now, an' hold 'em up, dere. Hello, baby, hya darrlin'. We kid dem darlin's aroun'. What do dey bring along wid dem. Lunch? Or is dat her overnight bag? Dere's a couple dicks in back. Dey got de lore on dere side, dem dicks dere. Widout guns dere meek as anybody else. Listen, gorgeous. Are ya married? Dat's good.

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Den you kin hannel it 'cause when dey get goin', nuttin's out. Lookit dem babies comin' acrost stage. Yah. Dere in de show. Dere's whites an' colored, about fifty percent. Day raised holy hell about it! Yeah, you wouldn't tink dere's people so narrer, would ya?

Watch dis, now. Dere tryin' out de new lights. Looka dat spill. Hey, Matt. It's a pleasure to sit in a teitter an' see such a steady arc. De beams a one a dem would light up dis joint like

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a Crismis tree. De principle is like de movie camerer. Ony it's fer a follow up light. Matt, irish dat down to a pin head, willya, so I kin see it. Not on me. Get dat damn ting offa me. Trow it out over dere. Dat's fine. Right on de Pansy. Yooohoo. Ain' he de one. De gang here when dey sees him, dey talk troo dere lips like dames when he passes. Christ'. Is he boined up. But dat flower always falls fer dere stuff. Lookit dat spot dey trow on him. Hey Mary, Wynt ya give yerself up? Okay. Toin dem arcs off. Trim 'em. Whatya wanna do, boin up all de cahbin?"